

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6898

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 12170

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI HARASSMENT IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF A) TEL AVIV 6215 B) CAIRO 12028

1. RE PARA 4 REF A ROSS CRAIG OF AMOCO HAS TOLD US THAT WHILE AMOCO MIGHT CLAIM FORCE MAJEURE AS REASON FOR NOT BEING ABLE CARRY OUT EXPLORATION, MINPET HILAL HAS TOLD HIM GOE WOULD NOT AGREE, SINCE PRE-1967 CONTRACTS DID NOT HAVE CALUSE CITED BY RABIN IN PARA 7 TEL AVIV 6187, WHICH CONCERNED POST-1973 CONCESSIONS. CRAIG'S OWN SUGGESTION WAS DESCRIBED PARA 3 REF B, BUT THIS WOULD ALSO REQUIRE EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT. AS OF NOW, CRAIG BELIEVES SEPT 21 IS FIRM TERMINATION DATE.

2. OUR UNDERSTANDING ON AMOCO'S FUTURE INTENTIONS IS THAT IT INTENDS DRILL AT 304.1 AND 304.13 AS WELL AS ONE OTHER WELL IN BLOCK 304. IT ALSO PLANS TO DRILL IN BLOCK 313, WHICH IS DIRECTLY SOUTH OF 304 (SEE PARA 7 REF B). ALL BLOCKS CITED ARE PART OF RAMADAN FIELD AND NEW WELLS ARE INTENDED TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF FIELD. INTERESTINGLY, ISRAELI RIG WHICH DRILLED DRY WELL OFF AT TUR IS NOW APPARENTLY POSIED OVER EXTREME EASTERN PORTION OF BLOCK 304, WHICH IS PART OF AMOCO'S LATER 1974 CONCESSION, WHICH WOULD SUGGEST ISRAELIS MAY ALSO INTEN TO TAP INTO RAMADAN FIELD. SUGGEST DEPT DISCUSS THESE PLANS WITH AMOCO HEAD OFFICE TO MAKE SURE CRAIG HAS ACCURATELY REFLECTED HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

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3. WITH REGARD TO RABIN/EVRON SUGGESTIONS ON PRACTICAL SOLUTION,
BOTH GOE AND AMOCO WOULD CLEARLY BE UNHAPPY AT ANY RESTRICTION ON
RIGHTS

TO EXOKIUT CONCESSION, BUT THEY SEEM EFFECTIVELY FRUSTRATED
BY ISRAELI ACTIONS AT THIS POINT.

AMOCO MIGHT BE WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH AN EXPANDED VERSION OF
RABIN/EVRON IDEA IF IT PERMITTED COMPANY TO DRILL ANYWHERE IN ITS
1964

CONCESSIONS WEST OF LINE IN GULF PARALLELING MOST EASTERLY WELLS IN M
ORGAN

FIELD (THIS IS ONLY EMBASSY'S OWN IDEA AND HAS NOT BEEN
MENTIONED TO AMOCO). GOE WOULD PROTEST AT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT
BUT THERE IS LITTLE IT CAN DO WITHOUT SETTING OFF MAJOR
FRACAS. USG AND AMOCO WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO HEAVILY
CAVEAT SUCH A DEAL TO PROTECT OUR LEGAL POSITIONS. BASIC QUESTION
SEEMS TO BE WHETHER WE SHOULD OPT FOR POSSIBLE TEMPORIZING
PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENT OR WHETHER OUR LEGAL POSITION IS OF SUCH
OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE THAT WE CANNOT PERMIT IT TO BE COMPROMISED.
WE BELIEVE THAT GOE POSITION WOULD BE TO HAVE ITS CAKE AND EAT IT
TOO, WHICH DOES NOT APPEAR POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, GOE AND ESPICALLY
HILAL ARE COUNTING ON ADDITIONAL OIL FINDS IN GULF TO MEET THEIR
PROMISED MILLION BARRLES PER DAY IN 1980, AND THEY MIGHT THEREFORE
GRUDGINGLY GO ALONG WITH PRACTICAL SOLUTION,

PROVIDED IT WERE SUFFICINETLY ATTRACTIVE (ONE WEL AT 304.1 WOULD
NOT BE). I DO NOT LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING TO ARGUE THIS OUT WITH
FAHMY, IF IT COMES TO THAT.

MATTHEWS

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